

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

Claims 1-33 (Canceled).

1 34. (Currently Amended) An image pickup apparatus, comprising:

(A) a protection cover operation device which operates a protection cover openable and closable to protect an image pickup optical system; and

(B) a detection device communicatively coupled to said protection cover operation device, wherein said detection device ~~which~~ detects whether or not said image pickup apparatus is in an exterior connection state in which said apparatus is functionally connectable to an exterior device,

wherein said detection device causes said protection cover operation device to open said protection cover when said detection device detects that said image pickup apparatus is in the exterior connection state.

2 35. (Currently Amended) An image pickup apparatus, comprising:

(A) a protection cover operation device which operates a protection cover openable and closable to protect an image pickup optical system; and

(B) a detection device communicatively coupled to said protection cover operation device, wherein said detection device ~~which~~ detects whether or not said image pickup apparatus is in an exterior connection state in which said apparatus is functionally connectable to an exterior device,

wherein said detection device causes said protection cover operation device to close said protection cover when said detection device detects that the image pickup apparatus comes out of

said exterior connection state.

3 36. (Currently Amended) An image pickup apparatus, comprising:

(A) a protection cover operation device which operates a protection cover openable and closable to protect an image pickup optical system; and

(B) a detection device communicatively coupled to said protection cover operation device, wherein said detection device ~~which~~ detects whether or not said image pickup apparatus is in an exterior connection state in which said apparatus is functionally connectable to an exterior device,

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wherein said detection device causes said protection cover operation device to open said ^{COVER} protection cover ~~in response to~~ when on the basis of input of a signal ~~related~~ corresponding to starting of the image pickup from said exterior device, said detection device detects that said image pickup apparatus is in the exterior connection state.

4 37. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim ³ 36, wherein said detection device causes said protection cover operation device to close said protection cover ~~in response to~~ on the basis of input of a signal ~~related~~ corresponding to finishing of the image pickup from said exterior device.

5 38. (Currently Amended) An image pickup apparatus, comprising:

(A) a protection cover operation device which operates a protection cover openable and closable to protect an image pickup optical system; and

(B) a detection device communicatively coupled to said protection cover operation device, wherein said detection device ~~which~~ detects whether or not said image pickup apparatus is in an exterior connection state in which said apparatus is functionally connectable to an

exterior device,

wherein said detection device causes said protection cover operation device to close said protection cover ~~in response to~~ when on the basis of input of a signal ~~related~~ corresponding to finishing of the image pickup from said exterior device, said detection device detects that said image pickup apparatus comes out of the exterior connection state.

6 39. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 38, wherein said detection device detects whether or not the signal related to the finishing of the image pickup is input during a predetermined time after the finish of the image pickup operation.

7 40. (Original) An apparatus according to claim 39, wherein when said signal related to the finishing of the image pickup is not inputted during the predetermined time, said detecting device inhibits said protection cover operation device from closing said protection cover and continues the image pickup operation.

Claims 41-43 (Canceled).

8 44. (Currently Amended) An image pickup apparatus, comprising:

(A) a protection cover operation device which operates a protection cover openable and closable to protect an image pickup optical system; and

(B) a detection device communicatively coupled to said protection cover operation device, wherein said detection device ~~which~~ detects whether or not said image pickup apparatus is in an exterior connection state in which said apparatus is functionally connectable to an exterior device,

wherein said detection device detects said image pickup apparatus is out of the exterior connection state by input of a signal indicating disconnection with said exterior device.

9 / 45. (Currently Amended) An image pickup apparatus, comprising:

(A) a protection cover operation device which operates a protection cover openable and closable to protect an image pickup optical system; and

(B) a detection device communicatively coupled to said protection cover operation device, wherein said detection device ~~which~~ detects whether or not said image pickup apparatus is in an exterior connection state in which said apparatus is functionally connectable to an exterior device,

wherein said detection device detects said image pickup apparatus is out of said exterior connection state by a signal indicating electrical disconnection with said exterior device.

10 / 46. (Currently Amended) An image pickup apparatus, comprising:

(A) a protection cover operation device which operates a protection cover openable and closable to protect an image pickup optical system; and

(B) a detection device communicatively coupled to said protection cover operation device, wherein said detection device ~~which~~ detects whether or not said image pickup apparatus is in an exterior connection state in which said apparatus is functionally connectable to an exterior device,

wherein said detection device detects said image pickup apparatus is out of the exterior connection state by input of a signal indicating mechanical disconnection with said exterior device.

[Claims 47-49 (Canceled).

11 / 50. (Currently Amended) An image pickup apparatus functionally connectable to an exterior device, comprising:

(A) a protection cover operation device which operates a closable and openable

protection cover for protecting an image pickup optical system; and

(B) a detection device communicatively coupled to said protection cover operation device, wherein said detection device ~~which~~ detects whether or not a signal related to image pickup is inputted from a functionally connected exterior device, said detection device deciding the operation of said protection cover operation device according to result of the detection.

¹² ~~51.~~ (Original) An apparatus according to claim ¹¹ ~~50~~, wherein said detection device causes said protection cover operation device to open said protection cover by the detection of input of a signal related to starting of the image pickup from said exterior device.

¹³ ~~52.~~ (Original) An apparatus according to claim ¹² ~~51~~, wherein said detection device causes said protection cover operation device to close said protection cover by the detection of input of a signal related to finishing of the image pickup.

¹⁴ ~~53.~~ (Original) An apparatus according to claim ¹¹ ~~50~~, wherein said detection device causes said protection cover operation device to close said protection cover by the detection of input of a signal related to finishing of the image pickup.

¹⁵ ~~54.~~ (Original) An apparatus according to claim ¹⁴ ~~53~~, wherein said detection device detects whether or not the signal related to the finishing of the image pickup is inputted during a predetermined time after the finish of the image pickup operation.

¹⁶ ~~55.~~ (Original) An apparatus according to claim ¹⁵ ~~54~~, wherein when said signal related to the finishing of the image pickup is not inputted during the predetermined time, said detection device inhibits said protection cover operation device from closing said protection cover and continues the image pickup operation.

¹⁷ ~~56.~~ (Original) An apparatus according to claim ¹¹ ~~50~~, further comprising a signal processing

device which converts an optical object picked up by said image pickup optical system into an electrical signal for indicating said optical object.

¹⁸ 57. (Original) An apparatus according to claim ¹¹ 50, further comprising a signal processing device which converts an optical object picked up by said image pickup optical system into a signal for recording said optical object.

¹⁹ 58. (Original) An apparatus according to claim ¹¹ 50, wherein said exterior device includes a computer.

²⁰ [Claims 59-60 (Canceled).

²⁰ 61. (Currently Amended) An image pickup apparatus comprising:

101 a protection cover operating device, ~~arranged to drive a protection cover which opens and closes to protect an image pickup optical member;~~

a detecting device, ~~arranged to detect whether or not said image pickup apparatus is connected to an external device;~~ and

a control device, communicatively coupled to said protection cover operation device and detecting device , wherein said control device is arranged to control said protection cover operating device so that when said detecting device detects that said image pickup apparatus is connected to said external apparatus and a signal from said external apparatus is supplied to said image pickup apparatus through the detected connection therebetween, the protection cover is opened in response to the signal supplied from said external apparatus.

²¹ 62. (Previously Presented) A control method of an image pickup apparatus, comprising the steps of:

operating a protection cover openable and closable to protect an image pickup

optical system of said image pickup apparatus; and

detecting whether or not said image pickup apparatus is in an exterior connection state in which said apparatus is functionally connectable to an exterior device,

wherein said detection step causes said operating step to open said protection cover when said image pickup apparatus is in the exterior connection state.

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~~63.~~ (Previously Presented) A control method of an image pickup apparatus, comprising the steps of:

operating a protection cover openable and closable to protect an image pickup optical system of said image pickup apparatus; and

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detecting whether or not said image pickup apparatus is in an exterior connection state in which said apparatus is functionally connectable to an exterior device,


wherein said detection step causes said operating step to close said protection cover when the image pickup apparatus comes out of said exterior connection state.

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~~64.~~ (Previously Presented) A control method of an image pickup apparatus functionally connectable to an exterior device, comprising the steps of:

operating a closable and openable protection cover for protecting an image pickup optical system of said image pickup apparatus; and

detecting whether or not a signal related to image pickup is inputted from a functionally connected exterior device, said detection step deciding the execution of said operating step according to result of the detection.

65. (Previously Presented) A unit detachable connectable to an apparatus which includes an electric power source, comprising:


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a communication device, arranged to transmit electric power consumption information of said unit to said apparatus which includes the electric power source; and

a control device, arranged to effect control so that an operation mode of said unit is switched to a mode for reducing power consumption thereof, in accordance with a control signal supplied from said apparatus in response to the electric power consumption information transmitted thereto by said communication device.

66. (Previously Presented) A unit according to claim 65, wherein said apparatus which includes the electric power source is arranged so as to be detachably connectable to a plurality of units and supply electric power to each of said plurality of units.

67. (Previously Presented) A unit according to claim 65, wherein said communication device transmits information obtained by said unit to said apparatus in addition to the electric power consumption information of said unit.

68. (Previously Presented) A unit according to claim 67, wherein said unit is an image pickup unit, and wherein the information obtained by said unit is an image pickup data of the image pickup unit.

 69. (Previously Presented) A control method of a unit which is detachably connectable to an apparatus which includes an electric power source, comprising the steps of:

transmitting electric power consumption information of said unit to said apparatus which includes the electric power source; and

effecting control so that an operation mode of said unit is switched to a mode for reducing power consumption thereof, in accordance with a control signal supplied from said apparatus in response to the electric power consumption information transmitted thereto in said

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~~transmitting~~ step.